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A  
S E R M O N

Preach'd at the Parish-Church of  
*St. Mary White-Chapel,*

O N  
*Tuesday Octob. 11. 1709.*

At the FUNERAL of  
Dame *MARY COOKE,*

Late WIFE of  
Sir JOHN COOKE, of *Doctor's Commons,*  
*London,* Knight, Doctor of L A W S, &c.

By *SAMUEL CLARK, D.D.*  
Rector of *St. James Westminster,* and Chaplain  
in Ordinary to Her MAJESTY.

Publish'd at the Request of her Relations.

L O N D O N:

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## 2 COR. V. 8.

*We are confident, I say, and willing  
rather to be absent from the Body,  
and to be present with the Lord.*

**T**HE Apostle in the foregoing Chapter, declares at large how the Assurance of a Resurrection from the Dead, not only enabled him to perform cheerfully all the Duties of a Christian Life, but supported him also, so as not to faint under, the severest Persecutions, which continually threatned him even with Death itself. *Therefore—as we have received Mercy, saith he, we faint not, ver. 1. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed, we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed, ver. 8, 9. The ground of which Comfort and Support, he expresses v. 10; Always bearing about in the Body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the Life also of Jesus might be*

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## *A Sermon Preach'd at the*

made manifest in our mortal Flesh; for we which live, are always delivered unto Death for Jesus sake, that the Life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal Flesh. And more clearly, v. 13, 14; Having the same Spirit of Faith —, and knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up Us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. After which he returns to the Inference he began with in the first Verse, v. 16; For which Cause we faint not, but tho' our outward Man perish, yet the inward Man is renewed day by day; for our light Affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory; while we look not at the Things which are seen, but at the Things which are not seen; for the Things which are seen, are Temporal; but the Things which are not seen, are Eternal.

From this general Consideration of the certainty of a future Life, as a ground of Support and Comfort under the Troubles of the present; he proceeds in the beginning of the fifth Chapter, to consider the particular Nature of that Body we shall be clothed withal at the Resurrection; and of that intermediate State, the Soul will find it



## Funeral of Dame Mary Cooke.

5

it self in, between Death and Judgment. As to the Nature of our future Body, he tells us, v. 1, that whereas our present Body is an *earthly House*, a Building framed out of the most perishable Materials, and of a Texture most frail and brittle; a *Tabernacle* tending perpetually in its own Nature by a gradual decay towards a *Dissolution*, and, during that short Period which it is capable of continuing, being every moment liable to be destroy'd by sudden Violence, by the Power of Men, and by the Assaults of acute Diseases; the Body we shall have hereafter, shall on the contrary be a *building of God*, an *House not made with Hands*, eternal in the *Heavens*; a Body, fram'd immediately by God himself; made capable of enduring for ever, and fitted to the Circumstances and Injoyments of that place, which God has provided for it in the Heavens.

The frequent Meditation upon which happy State, causes good Men to groane earnestly, v. 2, *desiring to be cloth'd upon with our House which is from Heaven*; if so be that being cloth'd, we shall not be found naked; for we that are in this *Tabernacle* do groane, being burdened; not for that we would be uncloth'd, but cloth'd upon, that *Mortality might be swallow'd up*.

## *A Sermon Preach'd at the*

*up of Life.* This Passage some understand to refer to what the same Apostle informs us of in the 15th Chapter of his foregoing Epistle, concerning those who shall be found alive at our Lord's second coming; that they shall not *die*, but be *changed*; not be *uncloth'd* of this mortal Body, but *clothed upon* with their heavenly Habitation; and that the Apostle here expresses a desire of escaping Death, and of being found among those, who without becoming *naked*, without being *separated* from the Body at all, shall *in a moment, in the twinkling of an Eye*, be *changed or clothed upon* with an immortal and incorruptible Body. But there is no need of interpreting the Words to this Sense. For when the Apostle affirms that we are desirous, not to be *uncloth'd*, but to be *cloth'd upon*; not to be found *naked*, but to be *cloth'd upon with our House which is from Heaven*; he does indeed prefer our *State after the Resurrection*, to the *State of Separation*; and represents good Men wishing to be delivered from the Burden of the Flesh, not merely for the sake of being separate from the Body, but chiefly and principally in hopes of being cloth'd with a better and more glorious one: But yet it does not therefore follow,

## Funeral of Dame Mary Cooke.

7

follow, that he meant to extend this Desire so far, as to the escaping of Death wholly, and avoiding the entring into the separate State at all; or that he thought this peculiar Circumstance of those who shall be found alive at our Lord's second coming, could possibly be the Case of those who lived so early as in his own time: Nay rather the contrary seems clearly to follow from the 6th Verse, and from the Words of the Text; where he speaks of *being absent from the Body*, as of a thing that would certainly happen to them, and that was truly desirable to good Men, and the Expectation whereof was a ground of *Confidence* and Support under the Troubles of Life, and against the Fears of Death: For that tho' the State after the Resurrection, when we shall be cloth'd with incorruptible and immortal Bodies like unto our Saviour's glorious Body, shall be much more happy and desirable, than the state of Separation; yet that state of Separation it self, that imperfect and incomplete State, is far superior to our Condition in this World, and more eligible than the Burden of the present Flesh. *Therefore we are always confident, says he, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we*  
are



*A Sermon Preach'd at the*

*are absent from the Lord; (for we walk by Faith, not by Sight;) we are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the Body, and to be present with the Lord.*

The Words are not well rendred, *whilst we are at home in the Body*; For this Body is not our proper *Home*; we are only *Strangers* and *Pilgrims* in the present World, and our Life is by St. Peter justly call'd, *The Time of our sojourning here*. But, whilst we dwell in the Body, (so the Words ought rather to be rendred,) or (as the same Word is translated in the following Verse,) *whilst we are present in the Body*; whilst we continue in this World, we are *absent* from the Fountain of Life and Happiness; we are at a distance from the heavenly *Jerusalem*, which is our proper Country; we are *absent from the Lord*; and live by *Faith only, not by Sight*: But, God having given unto us the earnest of his Holy Spirit, we are *confident* and have full Assurance of the Truth of these Things; we wean our selves therefore from the sensual Injoyments of the present World; we support and comfort our selves with these Meditations, under the Troubles of Life, and against the Fears of Death; we are *willing rather to be absent from*  
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## Funeral of Dame Mary Cooke.

9

*the Body, (whensoever it shall please God to release us;) and to be present with the Lord, which is far better.*

In the Words, and in the Context, we may observe the following Particulars plainly implied.

1<sup>st</sup>, That we must all shortly be *absent* or separate from this Body.

2<sup>dly</sup>, That That state of Separation, is not a state of absolute Insensibility.

3<sup>dly</sup>, That, to good Men, it is a state of great Happiness, a being *present with the Lord.*

4<sup>thly</sup>, That the Consideration of That intermediate Happiness, is a great Comfort and Support against the Fear of Death, *We are confident, and willing rather to be absent from the Body.*

5<sup>thly</sup> and *Lastly*, That That intermediate State, tho' a state of Happiness, yet is by no means equal to That Happiness, which good Men shall be possess'd of after the Resurrection. *For we that are in this Tabernacle do groane, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that Mortality might be swallow'd up of Life.*

1<sup>st</sup>, It is supposed in the Words, that we must all shortly be *absent* or separate from this Body. 'Tis evident there is no

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*A Sermon Preach'd at the*

need to *prove*, and one would think there should be no need to *remind* Men, that they must all die; when they have every Day such mournful Occasions as these, to excite their Consideration. Yet so it is, that even this *very Thing*, the *Frequency* of other Examples, and the indisputable *Certainty* of their own Mortality, makes them stand in need of the more earnest Exhortations, to persuade them not to forget or neglect it. For, as the strongest Objects that make perpetually an equal and continued Impression upon our Senses, are apt, by reason of their constant Presence, to affect us little more, than if they made no Impression upon the Sense at all; And as those great *Phænomena* of Nature, which we observe to return in the constant course of every Day, excite in us less Admiration, tho' in themselves the most wonderful of all the Works of God, than much less remarkable Things, which appear but seldom: so the absolute *Certainty* of our own Mortality, which leaves no room for Inquiry or Debate, makes Men almost as much lay aside the Thoughts of it, as if the *Certainty* were on the other side of the Question; and the *Frequency* of Instances which ought perpetually to remind



## Funeral of Dame Mary Cooke.

II

mind us what we must speedily expect, does, by a strange Carelessness and habitual Neglect, reconcile Men in such manner to the sight of Mortality in others, as if they Themselves were not concern'd in the Example. They shake off the Thoughts of it, as if there could be no Benefit in meditating upon what cannot be prevented; and look upon it as importune and troublesome to remind them of That, which it is not possible but they must already know. Yet That Knowledge, without Meditation, is like unto Ignorance; because it has no Effect, and makes no Impression. It is like the speculative Knowledge of a Truth, which concerns us not; or like the habitual Understanding of a Demonstration, never recollected. The Reason of this great Stupidity, seems to be the Uncertainty of the *Time* of every Man's Death; which makes Men look upon Life, as a long indefinite Period; and, because the *Time* of their Death is *uncertain*, it is to them as an *Uncertainty* in the *Thing* it *self*. To prevent this Folly therefore, the Scripture is perpetually reminding us, and putting us upon considering, That *our Days on Earth are as a Shadow, and there is no abiding,* That they are *swift* <sup>1 Chron. 29.</sup> <sup>Job 7. 6.</sup>

Job 9. 26.

Pfal. 90. 4.

5, 9.  
Jam. 4. 14.

Job 14. 2.

Pfal 90. 6.

Wisd. 5. 9.

ter than a Weaver's Shuttle ; that they flee away swifter than a Post ; that they pass away as the swift Ships, as the Eagle that hasteth to the Prey ; that they are as *A* sleep, as a watch in the Night ; as a Tale that is told ; that our Life is a Vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away ; that Man cometh forth like a Flower, and is cut down ; he fleeth also as a Shadow, and continueth not ; In the Morning it flourisheth and groweth up, in the Evening it is cut down and withereth. All which Similitudes are elegantly sum'd up together by the Author of the Book of Wisdom : All these things are passed away like a Shadow, and as a Post that hasted by ; And as a Ship that passeth over the Waves of the Water, which when it is gone by, the Trace thereof cannot be found, neither the Path-way of the Keel in the Waves ; Or as when a Bird has flown thro' the Air, there is no Token of her Way to be found — — — ; Or like as when an Arrow is shot at a Mark, it parteth the Air, which immediately cometh together again, so that a Man cannot know where it went thro' ; even so We in like manner, as soon as we were born, began to draw to our End, and have no sign of Virtue to shew. These Descriptions of the Vanity and Transitoriness of human Life, are too evidently true, to stand in need of any Proof. Yet the Riches and

## *Funeral of Dame Mary Cooke.*

13

and Honours, the Pleasures and Allurements of the World, hinder Men too usually from considering them; and Men act, as if they were to live here for ever. Providence therefore is very kind to us, in sending Afflictions upon us to awaken us out of this Lethargy; and we should be very Wise and Just to our selves, if we would suffer our selves to be brought to serious Consideration by the Troubles and Afflictions of others. When we see others taken out of the World before us, we know their Case must in a short time of Necessity be our own; and the Concern we always see dying Persons under, should make us endeavour without delay in the time of our Health and Strength, to lay the Foundation of a good Conscience, against the Day of Tryal. We are sure Eternity can never be very far distant from any of us; and we are always uncertain, but it may possibly be very near. And when Death approaches, Sickness and Pain are alone a Burden sufficient; and it will require all the Helps of Reason and Religion, all the Strength of the *Spirit of a Man*, to sustain at That time the *Infirmities* of Nature: But if the *Spirit* it self be wounded; if the Conscience be distract-  
ed.



*A Sermon Preach'd at the*

ed with too just Fears; if the great Work of Religion be then *undone*, and yet impossible to be *done*; if the *Spirit* of the Man, which should *support* him under his Infirmit<sup>y</sup>, does it self much more stand in need of *Comfort and Support*; *who can bear it*? This is the time when all false Colours vanish, and the great Difference and Distinction of Men begins truly to appear: Now the Profane, the Covetous, the Voluptuous, the Mocker and Scoffer at Religion, begins to judge by other Measures; and if *God should require some great Thing* of him, *would he not do it*? On the contrary, the sober and pious, the righteous and just Person, reflects then with unspeakable Comfort upon his past Life, when he remembers that he has either lived always innocent from great Crimes; or at least that the Sins of his Youth have not been so great, as the Repentance and Obedience of his wiser Age. And when the Vail is remov'd by Death, which transmits these different Persons to that State, where they are to wait for the final Sentence of the unerring Judgment of God; they themselves will judge still more and more clearly concerning the true nature of Things, and of their own Deserts. For Death is not  
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## Funeral of Dame Mary Cooke.

15

a total Extinction of the Man, but a Separation only of the Soul from the Body for a time. Which was the next particular I propos'd to discourse of. And here, for brevity sake, I shall put the

*Second and Third Particulars into One: viz.* That the state of Separation, is not a state of absolute Insensibility, but, to good Men, a state of great Happiness, a being *present with the Lord*. All the *Natural Arguments*, (for the *Moral Arguments* indeed prove only a future State *in general*, by the Resurrection of the *Body*, or otherwise;) all the *Natural Arguments*, I say, which prove to us by Reason the Spirituality and Immortality of the Soul, seem to prove no less strongly, that the separate State is not a state of Sleep or Insensibility. For if it is a good Argument to conclude with Cicero; I am persuaded, says \* he, when I consider with what swiftness of Thought the Soul is endued, with what a wonderful Memory of Things past, and fore-cast of Things to come; how many Arts, how many Sciences, how many wonderful Inventions it has found out; that That Nature, which is Possessor of such Faculties, cannot be Mortal: If this, I say, be a good

*Quid multa? Sic mihi persuasi, sic sentio; quum tanta celeritas animorum sit, tanta memoria præteritorum, futurorum providentia, tot artes, tantæ scientiæ, tot inventa; non posse eam naturam, quæ res eas contineat, esse mortalem. Cic. de senectute.*

Argu-

# A Sermon Preach'd at the

Argument, (and a very excellent one it is;) it seems no less just to infer with Cyrus in

\* Οὐτοί γε γὰρ, ὡς παῖ, ἔδ' ἐ-  
τατο πάποτε ἐπειδὴ, ὡς ἡ ψυ-  
χή, ἕως ἂν ἐν θνητῷ σώματι ᾖ,  
ζῇ. ὅταν δ' ἐτατὶ ἀπαλλαγῇ,  
τεθνήκεν. Οὐδέ γε ὅπως ἄρα  
ἔσαι ἡ ψυχὴ ἐπειδὴ τὸ ἄφρον-  
σώματι δίχα γένηται, ἐδ' ἐτα-  
το πεπεισμαι. Ἀλλ' ὅταν ἀκρα-  
τῷ καὶ καθαρῷ ὁ νῦν ἐκκεῖν,  
τότε καὶ φρονιμώτατον ἄνθρω-  
πὸν εἶναι. Cyrus. apud Xen.

Xenophon: I cannot imagine, saith  
\* he, that the Soul, while it is in  
this mortal Body, lives; and that,  
when it is separated from it, then it  
should die: I cannot persuade my  
self, that the Soul, by being sepa-  
rated from this Body, which is de-  
void of Sense, should thereupon be-

come it self likewise devoid of Sense: On the con-  
trary it seems to me more reasonable to believe, that  
when the Mind is separated from the Body, then it  
should become most of all sensible and intelligent.

But these were only the reasonable Conje-  
ctures of wise and considering Men. The

Scripture assures us with more Certainty

Rev. 14. 13.

and Authority, that *blessed are the Dead which  
die in the Lord, from henceforth; yea, saith the  
Spirit, that they may rest from their Labours, and  
their Works do follow them: Which Rest, that  
it is not the mere Rest of utter Insensibili-  
ty, appears from chap. 6. ver. 9. where 'tis  
said, I saw under the Altar the Souls of them that  
were slain for the Word of God; and for the Testi-  
mony which they held; and they cried with a loud  
Voice, &c.* The same thing is hinted to us  
by our Saviour, in the Parable of the rich

Man



## Funeral of Dame Mary Cooke.

17

Man and *Lazarus*; where the Soul of *Lazarus* is represented as carried by Angels into *Abraham's Bosom*, and that he was Luke 16. 22, comforted in That Place. And more clearly yet, in his Promise to the Penitent Thief, *Verily I say unto thee, to day shalt thou* Luke 23. 43. *be with me in Paradise*: To Day, that is, immediately, in the state of Separation; before the Resurrection of Christ, and his Ascension into his Kingdom. St. Paul had such a Notion of the Happiness of That State, that though his *abiding in the Flesh* he knew was better for the Church, yet he was in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to Phil. 1. 23, 24. depart and to be with Christ, which was far better for himself. And in the Text he declares; Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the Body, we are absent from the Lord; for we walk by Faith, not by Sight: We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the Body, and to be present with the Lord: The present Life he calls, walking only by Faith; the State after Death, walking by Sight or being present with the Lord. And accordingly all the best Writers in the Primitive Times, when they have occasion to mention the State of good Men departed, always speak of them as being

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\* in

\* Εἰς τὸν ὀφειλόμενον αὐτοῖς  
τίπον εἰσὶ τῷ κυρίῳ. Poly-  
carpi Epist.

† Παύλαχ' ὅς ὁ Σωτὴρ ὁραθῆ-  
σεται καθὼς ἄξιοι ἔσονται οἱ ὁρῶν-  
τες. Irenaeus, lib. 5.

\* in the Place appointed for them  
with the Lord; as † beholding  
our Saviour in Paradise, after  
such a manner as they are worthy  
to behold him; as being in a

Place of Rest, Refreshment, Comfort and Ex-  
pectation of the Completion of their Happiness at  
the Resurrection. Directly contrary to the  
Innovations of the Church of Rome, who,  
without any Appearance of Reason, and  
without any Colour of Authority from  
Scripture, teach that the Souls of good Men  
are tormented in a Purgatory of imaginary  
Fire, very little differing from that of Hell  
it self. How much better does even a Jew-  
ish Writer express himself upon this Sub-  
ject! *The Souls of the Righteous are in the  
Hand of God, and there shall no Torment touch  
them: In the Sight of the Unwise they seem'd  
to die, and their Departure is taken for Mise-  
ry; And their going from us, to be utter Destru-  
ction; But they are in Peace: For tho' they be  
punish'd in the Sight of Men, yet is their Hope  
full of Immortality.*

Wisd. 3. 1.

4thly, The Consideration of the Souls in-  
termediate Happiness in the separate State,  
is a great Comfort and Support against the  
Fear of Death: Therefore we are confident,  
says

## Funeral of Dame Mary Cooke.

19

says the Apostle, *and willing rather to be absent from the Body, and to be present with the Lord.* It is some degree of Comfort against the Fear of Death, to consider that it is the Necessity of Nature and the Appointment of God to all Men; *It is appointed unto Men* Heb. 9. 27. *once to die.* It is some further degree of Support, to consider that Death is as it were the Haven of Rest, from the Storms and Troubles, the Calamities and Sorrows of the World: *There the Wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary be at Rest; There the Prisoners rest together, they hear not the Voice of the Oppressor: The Small and Great are there, and the Servant is free from his Master;* But after all the Arguments of Comfort that can be drawn from Reason and Philosophy, Death is still the *King of Terrors* to Nature, and is become *much more* so thro' Sin. But Christ has now, to all such as truly repent, taken away that *Sting*, and removed the *Fear*; having *destroy'd him that had* Heb. 2. 15. *the Power of Death, that is, the Devil; and delivered them, who thro' Fear of Death were all their Life-time subject to Bondage.* Death is now *abolish'd*, to all good Men, and be- 2 Tim. 1. 10. *come nothing else, but a Passage to a glorious Immortality.* And 'tis a great Addition



*A Sermon Preach'd at the*

of Comfort and Support, to consider that even That *Passage* it self is not a *Dark Passage* thro' a state of utter *Insensibility*; but a being *present with the Lord* in some degree of Communication, and Fore-tast of a more perfect Happiness. The pious Lady, whose Death we now lament, took particular Satisfaction in Meditating frequently upon this Subject; and in inquiring into the full Extent and Signification of those Texts which relate to it. She made the Holy Scriptures her daily Study and Delight, and was much conversant in many other excellent Books of Piety and Devotion; and the Comfort such Studies administer against the Fear of Death, is then truly effectual, when 'tis applied by such Persons, as are prepar'd to receive it by the preceding Course of a Holy Life. For the space of two Years, wherein Providence allotted me to perform the Duties of my Ministry in the Parish wherein she dwelt, (and wherein I receiv'd singular Civilities, particularly from that eminent Society for the Profession and Practise of the Civil-Law, which ought always gratefully to be acknowledged;) I was my self a Witness of her constant and never-failing Attendance upon the  
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## *Funeral of Dame Mary Cooke.*

25

publick Service of God, and the Administration of the Sacrament, with the most earnest Zeal and Devotion: And, in all the Opportunities I had of observing it, her private Conversation appear'd perfectly agreeable to her Religious Behaviour in Publick. Which, in a Person in the Strength and Vigor of her Age, very little exceeding 30 Years at the time of her Death, is *an Example* that may be recommended with Justice and Usefulness. But to enlarge too far upon Characters, even of such truly pious Persons, is neither giving any real Advantage to the Memory of the Dead, nor of so much Benefit to the Living, as exhorting them upon these Occasions to prepare themselves for Death which they are all hastening to, by setting before their Eyes continually the most perfect Example of Christ, and the Precepts of the Gospel; in following of which, all good and holy Men and Women who have gone before us, have obtain'd a good Report.

5<sup>thly</sup> and *Lastly*, The intermediate state of Separation, tho' a state of great Happiness, yet is by no means equal to That Happiness, which good Men shall be possess'd of after the Resurrection: *For we that*  
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## *A Sermon Preach'd at the*

*are in this Tabernacle do grone, being burden'd; not for that we would be unclotb'd, but clotb'd upon, that Mortality might be swallow'd up of Life. St. Paul, tho' he knew, that when he was absent from the Body, he should be present with the Lord, in a state of Rest and Security and perfect Assurance, in a state of great Happiness and Joy unspeakable; yet tells us, that the Crown of Righteousness was laid up for him, not to be given him by the Righteous Judge before That great Day. And our Saviour himself bids the Charitable Person expect his final Recompense, at the Resurrection of the Just. And in the Place before-cited, the Souls of the Martyrs themselves, which St. John saw in his Vision under the Altar, are represented as in a state of Expectation only; How long, O Lord, Holy and True, &c. And it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little Season, until their Fellow-Servants also, and their Brethren that should be kill'd as They were, should be fulfilled. In a Word; The Souls of the Righteous are doubtless as happy, as they can be in that imperfect state of Separation from their Bodies: But 'tis after the Resurrection only, that their Happiness shall be complete, and that they shall shine forth as*  
*the*

Rev. 9. 7.



## Funeral of Dame Mary Cooke.

23

*the Sun, in the Kingdom of their Father : When our Lord shall have changed this vile Body, that it may be fashion'd like unto his glorious Body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all Things unto himself ; That is, when This Body, which has now in it such manifest Principles of Mortality and Corruption ; which consists now of such brittle and tender Parts, that every the least Violence disturbs and unfits them for their Operations ; when this Body, which is now so weak and feeble, so dull, heavy and unactive, that it clogs the Soul, and retards and hinders its spiritual Operations ; when this Body, which is now subject to so many Casualties, and has its Continuance depending upon the fit Disposition of so many little and easily disorder'd Parts, that 'tis a greater wonder how we continue to live a day, than why we die after so few year's Space ; shall be perfectly refin'd and purg'd from all the Seeds of Mortality and Corruption ; shall spring up into an incorruptible and immortal Substance, which shall be fitted to indure as long as the Soul to which it is to be united, even to all Eternity ; shall become so strong and powerful, so active and vigorous, as even to be assisting to the most spiritual*

*A Sermon Preach'd at the*

ritual Motions of the Soul, to become every way a fit Organ and Instrument of its most exalted Operations; and shall continue in this perfect Health, Strength, and Vigor for ever: For God shall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes, and there shall be no more Death, neither Sorrow nor Crying, neither shall there be any more Pain; for the former Things are passed away.

*To which happy State, that we may all arrive, God of his infinite Mercy grant,  
&c.*

*F I N I S.*

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